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C H ' A N  
N E W S  
L E T T E R

## Entering the Gate

*This is a chapter from Master Sheng-yen's latest book, Dharma Drum: The Life and Heart of Ch'an Practice.*

Ch'an is often referred to as the "gateless gate." The "gate" is both a method of practice and a path to liberation; this gate is "gateless," however, which means that Ch'an does not employ any specific method to help a practitioner achieve liberation. The methodless method *is* the highest method. So long as a practitioner can drop his or her self-centered conscious mind, the gateway into Ch'an will open naturally. Nevertheless, most people stand outside of the gate and remain stuck in the idea of enlightenment. Unable to experience enlightenment themselves, they can only be inspired by the stories of enlightened Ch'an masters. For this reason, many people in China have thought of Ch'an as something that can only be practiced by young people with good karmic roots.

In response to people's needs, past Ch'an masters adapted other forms of practice and invented methods that made Ch'an more accessible. In fact, we can say that there is not a single spiritual practice that falls outside of Ch'an cultivation — so long as it is practiced with the understanding of Ch'an. For example, sitting meditation, or the cultivation of samadhi, is not the final goal of Ch'an practice. But in order to reach the state of Ch'an, you must have a foundation in samadhi. In fact, the term for sitting meditation in both Chinese (tso-ch'an) and Japanese (zazen) derive from the words "Ch'an" and "Zen".

In most spiritual traditions of India, the yogis practice dhyana to attain various levels of samadhi; a high level of samadhi is the goal of their practice. Before his enlightenment, Sakyamuni Buddha also practiced this and attained the highest state of samadhi possible at that time. But after years of austere practice as a yogi, he recognized that his realization was incomplete. So he sat under the Bodhi tree, vowing not to rise until he had resolved the question of birth and death, the suffering of samsara. Only after seeing a bright morning star and becoming enlightened did he rise. He had become a Buddha, the primal transmitter of Buddhism in our epoch. The Buddha's enlightenment became the paradigm of tso-ch'an.

With the rise of the Ch'an school, two forms of practice developed. One approach de-emphasized the practice of tso-ch'an. The other placed great emphasis on this practice. Both approaches can lead to

No. 118 September 1996

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enlightenment, the realization of no-self. These Ch'an practices are similar to those of traditional Buddhism, which stresses two practices that lead to liberation. The first practice is called liberation through samadhi. The second is called liberation through wisdom. The latter practice does not cultivate the various levels of samadhi or dhyana, but goes directly into the enlightened state. The practice of liberation through samadhi cultivates the various levels of samadhi or dhyana, until you reach liberation from samsara. Ch'an follows the path of liberation through wisdom.

To discuss the two approaches of Ch'an, we must describe what tso-ch'an is. When pre-Ch'an masters practiced, they mostly used the methods introduced in the early Buddhist scriptures; according to their interpretation, tso-ch'an referred to sitting methods that led to samadhi. But among the later masters of Ch'an, tso-ch'an referred to methods of attaining enlightenment that did not necessarily involve samadhi as an intermediate or final stage. The same holds true for the term samadhi. In later usage, the term was conjoined with wisdom.

We should not devalue the traditional cultivation of meditation practice, which, when practiced properly, can make our bodies healthy and our minds balanced. With the practice of tso-ch'an, our minds can have fewer attachments to self-centeredness and can become much more stable

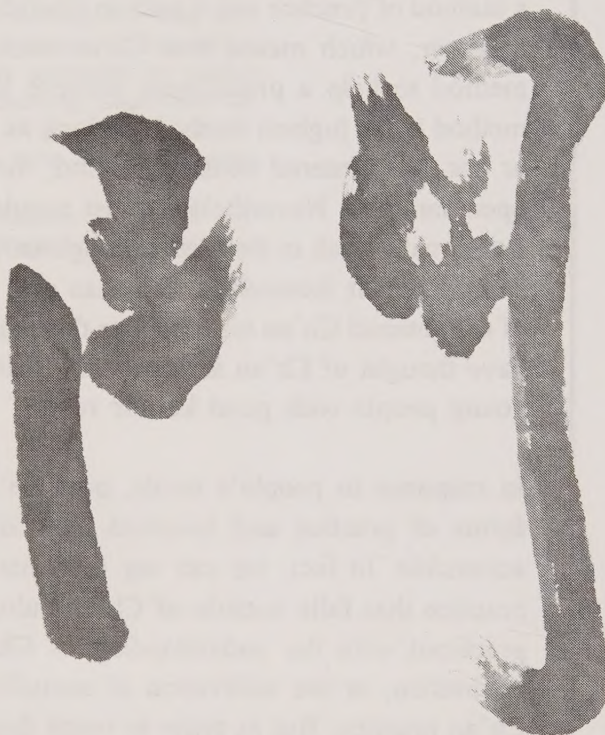
and clear. Furthermore, the limits of the mind can be stretched to accommodate insight and wisdom. From the perspective of Ch'an, however, any insight or wisdom that arises within us with-

out the guidance of Buddhadharma will still bear residual effects of vexation, because our self-centeredness remains. When we confront adverse situations, perhaps in our relations with people, surroundings, or events, vexation can arise at any time from this self-centeredness. Needless to say, pain and suffering invariably follow vexation.

Tso ch'an focuses on regulating body, breath, and mind. Regulating the body involves relaxing the body while sit-

ting in a correct posture. In order to cultivate physical well-being, however, you really need to regulate all aspects of your life. Besides the sitting posture, you can practice walking meditation, sleeping postures, exercises, and massages. You should also regulate and balance your daily diet, your work habits, and the amount of time you sleep. There must be equanimity between movement and stillness.

Regulating the breath is a multi-layered process that can help you reach many different levels of practice. Breath and mind are very much connected: you can regulate your mind by regulating your breath, because when your breathing is smooth and stable, your mind becomes stable. Every tradition of spiritual meditation practice,



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"Gate" by P.L. Jin



including Taoism, yoga, tantra, and Buddhism, all begin by regulating the breath, for the very simple reason that it is the breath within the body that helps the circulation of energy. This energy, or *ch'i*, in turn maintains the functions of the physical body. When practitioners experience the benefits of the *ch'i*, they tune into the importance and pleasure of meditation practice.

According to your level of concentration, there can be four levels of breathing:

The first level, nostril breathing, is the shallowest one. Its meaning is just what the name suggests. At this stage, you are breathing through the nostrils about 16 to 18 breaths per minute.

The second level is called abdominal breathing. As your breathing becomes deeper, although your breath still passes through the nostrils, there are movements of the rising and falling of the abdomen.

The third level is called embryonic breathing. At this stage, the breath no longer passes through the nostrils. Instead, every pore throughout the body is breathing. The whole universe is like the womb of the mother, and your body — the embryo — receives oxygen directly from the environment.

The fourth level is called tortoise breathing. At this stage, oxygen from the external environment is no longer needed. Your metabolism slows down so much that even the heart stops beating. You are in a very deep state of *samadhi*. The body of the meditator becomes its own small universe. The energy inside the body circulates, supports, and nourishes itself.

Regulating the mind involves learning to be in control of your thoughts. Usually, methods of *samatha* and *vipassana* are used to collect and

calm the scattered mind. Traditional methods within Buddhism — counting the breath, following the breath, and contemplating the impurity of the body — help you reach a calm and collected state of mind and body. You can also calm and balance mind and body by practicing prostration, walking meditation, and recitation of the Buddha's name.

The traditional purpose of *tso-ch'an* practice is to concentrate and unify the mind. When people reach this state, they usually think they are enlightened, or that they have achieved the state of no-self. In reality, whatever they may experience is at most just a stage of *samadhi*. There are eight stages of *samadhi*; none of them go beyond the state of the unified mind. These states are not the wisdom of emptiness, because attachment to the self still exists even when the mind is unified. From the perspective of *Ch'an*, even though you may experience *samadhi* (or *ch'an-ting* in Chinese) states, the attainment is still very different from the kind of *samadhi* that *Ch'an* talks about.

So what is the meaning of *samadhi* or *ch'an-ting* in the *Ch'an* tradition? The *Platform Sutra* of the Sixth Patriarch Hui-neng says: "Externally without any features is *Ch'an*; internally the unscattered mind is *ting* . . . Not seeing the right and wrong of others . . . moment to moment, one perceives the purity of the intrinsic self-nature." From this description, we see that *Ch'an-ting* goes beyond achieving a unified state of mind. *Ch'an-ting* aims for the pure wisdom that illuminates any circumstance you might confront.

Simply put, the obstacle to attaining wisdom is attachment to the self. When you face people, things, and situations, the notion of "I" arises immediately within you. When you attach to this "I," you begin making all sorts of value judgments.



But how might we define nonattachment? According to Ch'an, nonattachment means that when you face circumstances, when you deal with other people, there's no "I" in relation to whatever may appear in front of you. There will be no extra discriminations added to the situation. Things are as they are, vivid and clear. You can respond appropriately and give whatever is needed.

Self-centered attachment rears up most often in situations involving family matters, relationships between men and women, and, not least, money. We confront self-centeredness as well when our social status, opinions, and views are at stake. Finally, practitioners find it very difficult to let go of the accomplishments and experiences they've achieved in their practice. They may be willing to drop everything, but when it comes to the value they place on concepts and views of practice or personal experiences, they cannot let go. Even advanced practitioners sometimes are very arrogant. They believe or affirm that they have experienced and achieved something, and consequently obstruct their liberation. In short, any attachment, be it to circumstances, to people, and even to practice, will prevent you from summing the cultivation of wisdom.

Ch'an expressions refer to enlightenment as "seeing your self-nature." But even this is not enough. After seeing your self-nature, you need to deepen your experience even further and bring it into maturation. You should have enlightenment experiences again and again and support them with continuous practice. Even though Ch'an says that at the time of enlightenment, your outlook is the same as that of the Buddha, you are not yet a full Buddha. Therefore, in old China, prior to enlightenment, Ch'an adepts would practice very hard. After enlightenment, they would sojourn to various Ch'an masters to refine their understanding and deepen their experience. For only then would they have the "clear eyes" needed to seek out

genuine masters and study under them.

Even though the practice of tso-ch'an is engaged before and after enlightenment, Ch'an is not necessarily sitting practice. Therefore, in the *Platform Sutra*, Hui-neng said: "In [my Dharma] gate of tso-ch'an, one should neither hold on to mind nor observe purity. [I do not teach people] to be imperturbed . . . [Though] I know some people teach others to observe their mind and contemplate purity, making the mind unmoving so it gives rise to nothing, these teachers are just deluding others; eventually, people will be so attached to this method as to become insane." Ch'an advocates that samadhi and prajna, or wisdom, are inseparable. Samadhi is the essence of prajna, and prajna is the function of samadhi.

The opening verse of *Faith in Mind*, a poem attributed to Seng-tsan, the third patriarch of Ch'an in China (d.606) says, "The Ultimate Path is not difficult, so long as you do not pick and choose." What this means is that finding and attaining the highest Path is not hard. If you can leave behind your discriminating mind, then the Path will naturally manifest in front of you. Why is this so? Because the Path is natural and originally present. It is not something expedient. If the Path can be practiced through fabricated methods, then whatever you practice will not be the genuine Path, but the expedient Path.

When Ma-tsu became a Ch'an master, he advocated that the "ordinary mind" is the Path. Whether you are walking, standing still, sitting, or lying down, everything is Ch'an practice. He taught that the Bodhisattva Path is neither the path of the ordinary people nor the sages. You should not intentionally fabricate some kind of practice, nor get involved in what is right or wrong, in grasping and rejecting. This is the practice of what he calls the "ordinary mind."



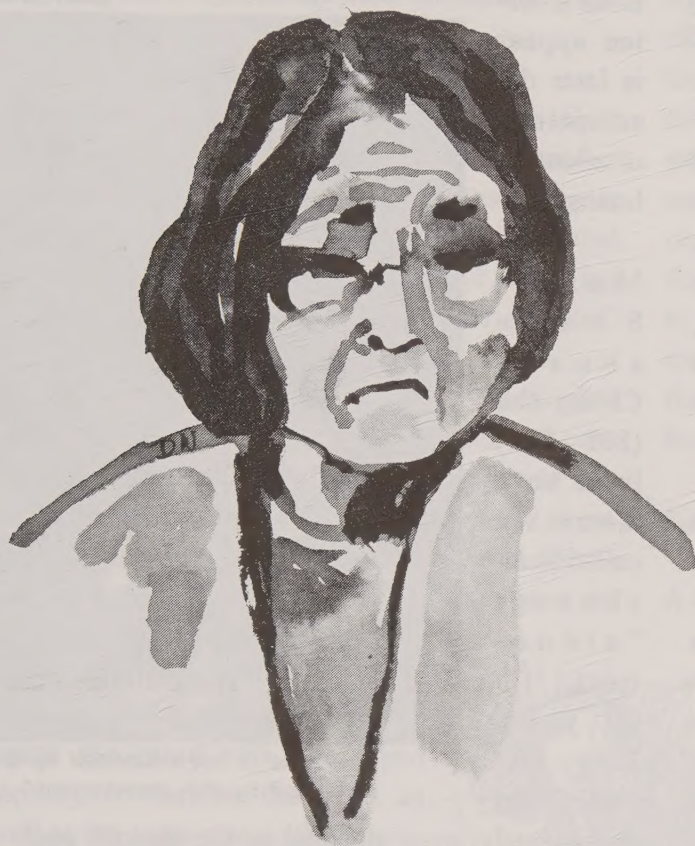
Although Hui-neng and some other early patriarchs following him de-emphasized tso-ch'an practice, most great Ch'an masters did practice

mountains.

Actually, this aspect of making your daily work the practice of Ch'an was not something that Pai-chang created. Hui-neng himself also lived his practice. Before meeting the Fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen, Hui-neng chopped firewood for a living. After meeting Hung-jen, he was sent not to the meditation hall, but to the kitchen to grind rice. During his years working in the kitchen, Hui-neng cultivated his mind, teaching himself to maintain a stable and concentrated state of awareness. In doing so, he let go of the ups and downs of emotions and moods. Achieving this clear awareness is important, because only in this mental state will a practitioner have a chance to become enlightened. Of course, practitioners also need correct guiding views. Even before meeting Hung-jen, Hui-neng had experienced an initial enlightenment, which occurred when he overheard someone reciting a verse from the *Diamond Sutra*. From his enlightenment experience, he understood attachment and detachment, as well as the difference between self and no-self. These understandings became his guiding views.

intensely. For example, in the monastic rules of Ch'an master Pai-chang (720-814), the immediate successor of Ch'an master Ma-tsu, there were regulations concerning daily tso-ch'an practice. Even though there were no accounts of how many hours they sat daily, their meditation platforms were built so people could lie down when necessary. From this we can presume that the monks spent most of their time sitting. Practice also guided the monks' daily routines and their work in the community. A famous motto passed down through the generations from Pai-chang's community insists, "A day without work is a day without food." We know from records that the monks supported themselves in part by working in rice fields and chopping up firewood in the

The second approach of Ch'an does advocate the practice of tso-ch'an. From this point of view, wisdom is generated from samadhi. According to the Fifth Patriarch Hung-jen's treatise on *The Essentials of Practice*, "To engage in the practice, one must know the principle of the Dharma; guarding the Mind is most crucial." This practice teaches people to guard their innate True Mind. If the True Mind is well guarded, delusion does not arise. When delusion does not arise, the notion of "I" and "mine" will naturally dissolve and fundamental ignorance is extinguished. You then become a Buddha. This actually is a form of



Who am I?

Dorothy Weiner



samadhi practice.

In *The Song of Samatha*, great master Yung-chia (665 - 713) talks about "clarity and quiescence, quiescence and clarity." Clarity is *kuan* or contemplation, a practice of contemplating and illuminating your mind. Quiescence is *chih* or cessation, a practice of ending delusionary, scattered thoughts. When using this method, if you reach a point when not a single thought arises, then your mind can become extremely clear and bright. This is when the state of quiescence and clarity, contemplation and cessation are simultaneous. It is possible at this time for enlightenment to manifest.

The two major methods of Ch'an that have come to us from China are the method of silent illumination and the method of the kung-an and hua-t'ou. In China, the development of each method's distinct characteristics branched into two distinct schools of Ch'an Buddhism, namely, the Ts'ao-tung (Jp. Soto) and Lin-chi (Jp. Rinzai) schools. In relation to tso-ch'an, these two methods represent the two different approaches toward Ch'an.

### Silent Illumination Ch'an

The term "silent illumination," or *Mo-chao*, is associated with the Sung dynasty Master Hung-chih Cheng-chueh (1091 - 1157). However, the practice itself may be traced back at least as far as Bodhidharma. In his treatise *Two Entries and the Four Practices*, entry by principle went as follows: "Leaving behind the false, return to the true: make no discriminations between self and others. In contemplation, one's mind should be stable and unmoving, like a wall."

In *Faith in Mind*, Seng-ts'an says, "The principle is neither hurried nor slow — one thought for ten thousand years." "One thought" refers to the mind which is completely clear and free from attach-

ment. "Ten thousand years" is simply a very long time without interruption. Passages similar to S e n g - ts'an's often appear in later descriptions of silent illumination.

M a s t e r S h i h - s h u a n g Ch'ing-chu (805 - 888) lived on a mountain called Shih-shuang, "stone-frost," for 20 years. His disciples sat

continuously, even sleeping in the upright position. In their stillness, they looked like so many dead tree stumps that they were named the "dry wood sangha." Shih-shuang had two famous pieces of advice. One was, "to sit Ch'an, fix your mind on one thought for ten thousand years." The other was, "let yourself be like cold ashes, or like dry wood."

Hung-chih, the founder of Silent Illumination Ch'an, studied for a while with Ch'an master K'u-mu. He was called K'u-mu, "dry wood," because when he sat, his body resembled a block of dry wood. In the hands of Hung-chih, this practice evolved into what he called silent illumination. He describes so-called "silent sitting" thus: "Your body sits silently; your mind is quiescent, unmoving. This is genuine effort in practice. Body and mind are at complete rest. The

Meei Hwa Chern



"...the mind is not influenced by or disturbed by the environment."



mouth is so still that moss grows around it. Grass sprouts from the tongue. Do this without ceasing, cleansing the mind until it gains the clarity of an autumn pool, bright as the moon illuminating the evening sky."

In another place, Hung-chih said, "In the silent sitting, whatever realm may appear, the mind is very clear to all the details, yet everything is where it originally is, in its own place. The mind stays on one thought for ten thousand years, yet does not dwell on any forms, inside or outside."

How is silent illumination different from what Hui-neng criticizes as "observing mind and contemplating purity?" What Hui-neng refers to is a method of samadhi that lacks wisdom. Or more accurately, samadhi is not a method; it is a consequence, or goal of practice. It has no space, no time, and no sense of environment. Silent illumination differs from samadhi practice in that while it keeps the mind still (the silent aspect), it clarifies the inner as well as the outer states (the illumination aspect). Samadhi is silent but not illuminating. In silent illumination, the mind does not abide anywhere. Nothing, not even samadhi, is dwelt on. In the deep level of silent illumination, the mind is not influenced by or disturbed by the environment. Not being fixed in samadhi, the mind is in a bright state of illumination. This is what the meditator works continually to maintain in silent illumination practice.

To understand silent illumination Ch'an, it is important to understand that while there are no thoughts, the mind is still very clear, very aware. Both the silence (mo) and the illumination (chao)

must be there. According to Hung-chih, when there is nothing going on in one's mind, one is aware that nothing is happening. If one is not aware, this is just Ch'an sickness, not the state of Ch'an. So in this state, the mind is transparent. In a sense, it is not completely accurate to say that there is nothing present, because the transparent mind is there. But it is accurate in the sense that nothing can become an attachment or obstruction. At this stage, the mind is without form or feature. Power is present, but its function is to fill the mind with illumination, like the sun, shining everywhere. Hence, silent illumination is the tso-ch'an in which there is nothing moving, but the mind is bright, illuminated.

### Kung-an and Hua-t'ou Ch'an

A kung-an is a story of an incident between a



Lawrence Waldron

master and one or more disciples, which involves an understanding or experience of the enlightened mind. The incident usually, but not always, involves dialogue. When the incident is remembered and recorded,

it becomes a "public case," which is the literal meaning of the term. Often what makes the incident worth recording is that, as the result of the interchange, a disciple had an awakening, an experience of enlightenment.



Master Chao-chou (778 - 897), was asked by a monk, "Does a dog have Buddha-nature?", to which the master replied, "Wu", meaning nothing. As kung-ans go, this is a basic one, possibly the most famous on record. Here is another kung-an, also involving Chao-chou.

Chao-chou had a disciple who met an old woman on the road and asked her, "How do I get to Mt. T'ai?" She said, "Just keep going!" As the monk started off, he heard the old lady remark, "He really went!" Afterwards, the disciple who mentioned this to Chao-chou who said, "I think I'll go over there and see for myself." When he met her, Chao-chou asked the same question and she said the same thing: "Just keep going!" As Chao-chou started off, he heard the old lady say again, "He really went!" When Chao-chou returned, he said to the assembly, "I have seen through that old lady." What did Chao-chou find out about the old lady? What is the meaning of this lengthy and obscure kung-an?

Around the time of the Sung dynasty (960 - 1279), Ch'an masters began using kung-ans from the records as a subject of meditation for their disciples. The practitioner was required to investigate the meaning of the historical kung-an. In his attempts to penetrate the meaning of the kung-an, the student has to abandon knowledge, experience, and reasoning, since the answer is not accessible to these methods. He must find the answer by *ts'an* kung-an, by "investigating the

kung-an." This requires his sweeping from his consciousness everything but the kung-an and eventually generating the "doubt sensation," which is a strong sense of wonder and an intense desire to know the meaning of the kung-an.

Closely related, but not identical to the kung-an, is the hua-t'ou. A hua-t'ou, literally, "head of the spoken word," is a question that a meditator asks

him or herself. "What is Wu?" or "Who am I?" are commonly used hua-t'ous. In the hua-t'ou practice, the meditator devotes his full attention to repeatedly, incessantly, asking the question. The kung-an and the hua-t'ou methods are similar in a sense that the meditator tries to arouse the great doubt sensation in order to eventually shatter it and awaken to enlightenment.



*Tso-ch'an*

Ch'an master Ta-hui Tsung-kao (1089 - 1163) was one of the greatest advocates of hua-t'ou practice. From his record of sayings, he maintained that tso-ch'an was very necessary to settle the wandering mind and bring about samadhi. It is only then that the student can effectively use the kung-an or hua-t'ou. Even though kung-an and hua-t'ou practice can be done while walking, standing, or even lying down, its fundamental basis is still tso-ch'an.

If through tso-ch'an, a student's mind becomes very peaceful and stable, the application of the kung-an or hua-t'ou may cause the rise of the great doubt. This doubt is not the ordinary doubt



of questioning the truth of an assertion. It is the doubt that arises out of *ts'an* Ch'an, investigating Ch'an. The resolution of the kung-an or hua-t'ou hinges on nurturing the great doubt. Because the nature of the question cannot be resolved by logic, the practitioner must begin by continually returning to the question, and in the process clear his mind of everything except the great doubt.

Eventually, this accumulated "doubt mass" grows bigger and bigger, and can disappear in one of two ways: Due to lack of concentration or energy, the meditator will not be able to sustain the doubt, and it will dissipate. Or the meditator can persist until his doubt is like a "hot ball of iron stuck at his throat." In this case, the doubt mass will eventually disappear in an explosion.

If the explosion has enough energy, it is possible that the student will experience Ch'an, see Buddha-nature, become enlightened. If not, there will probably still be some attachment in his mind. It is necessary and important for a master to confirm his experience, since the student, with rare exceptions, cannot do that himself. Even as great a master as Ta-hui did not penetrate sufficiently into his first experience. His master Yuan-wu (1063-1135) told him, "You have died, but you have not come back to life." He was confirmed on his second experience. So what is a true experience? It takes an adept master to tell. If he is not a genuine master, he won't know the difference between a true and false enlightenment.

Even though Ch'an talks about "non reliance on words and language," guiding concepts and views are still very important in the course of your practice. Even though you should not become attached to words and language, you still need them to get the message of Buddhadharma. In Ch'an, this idea is called "borrowing the teachings to awaken the principle."

Had Hui-neng never heard the verse from the *Diamond Sutra*, "Give rise to mind while abiding nowhere," he would not have experienced his initial awakening. Had he only held on to those words he heard, he would not have attained enlightenment. Ch'an takes the teachings as "the finger pointing to the moon." If there were no finger, no one would know where the moon is. If everyone just held on to the finger, and did not see where it pointed, then the finger would be useless. But if people could truly see the moon, the finger would no longer be necessary.

It is because people cannot calm their minds that the practice of tso-ch'an is needed. Even though people engage in practice, they may still be unable to maintain concentration and stability. So continual practice of tso-ch'an is needed. We can say that even though Ch'an is not necessarily the result of sitting practice, by engaging in sitting practice, the power of samadhi generated will be a good foundation for enlightenment. However, if your practice is very loose and lacks correct guiding views, you will never enter the gate of Ch'an.





## News from the Center:

Master Sheng-yen's new book, *Dharma Drum: The Life and Heart of Ch'an Practice* is out. The book is divided into two sections. The first includes teachings about Ch'an, to help us develop and maintain right view, including the talk published in this Newsletter. The second section is made up of short statements and anecdotes intended to help us awaken our wisdom and compassion. Please ask for it at your local book store.

Venerable Guo-chou Shi represented Master Sheng-yen, Dharma Drum Mountain and Ch'an Buddhism at the Gethsemani Encounter, an international conference on monasticism at Gethsemani Monastery in Kentucky, from July 22 to 27. During the 1993 Parliament of World Religions His Holiness the Dalai Lama perceived that there is a need for inter religious dialogue, and expressed his wish for a week-long conference to take place at Gethsemani, which was the home of his spiritual friend Thomas Merton. The Encounter was sponsored by the Monastic Inter religious Dialogue. Sixty-five Christian and twenty-five Buddhist monastics and scholars participated. The fundamental teachings, methods and levels of practice, and the roles of teacher and monastics in Buddhism and Christianity were expounded and discussed. Participants also took part in a tree planting ceremony, and in Buddhist and Christian rituals. Each morning there was meditation followed by a Buddhist ritual or morning service. Guo-chou Shi led participants in a Ch'an morning service, and also gave a talk on the role of the teacher in Ch'an.

The garden in the back yard of the Ch'an Center has been replaced with a beautiful brick patio and smaller gardens. The changes were designed and overseen by Mr. I-tsang Ma. We would like to thank the many people who helped, including retreat participants and especially Estelle Gerard, David Ngo and Mr. Bin-geng Yang.

## Upcoming Events:

### Seminar

## "T'ien-t'ai Manuscripts for Meditation"

**Fri. Sept 27, 7 PM to Sun. Sept 29, 3 PM.**

As part of our Buddhist Education Program, the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Culture is happy to present a seminar on T'ien-t'ai Buddhist teachings on samatha and vipassana practices. The seminar will be presented by Professor Daniel Stevenson of the University of Kansas. It should be of particular interest to practitioners, because T'ien-t'ai teachings on meditation have been used by many schools of Buddhism, including Ch'an.

Please call for a brochure and to register.



**Master Sheng-yen returns to the Center on Oct. 21.**

**Dharma Gathering and public talk by Master Sheng-yen:** Oct. 25, for English-speaking people.

**Seven Day Retreats:** We are now accepting applications for the Thanksgiving (7 PM Nov. 29 to 8 AM Dec. 6) and Christmas (7 PM Dec. 25 to 8 AM Jan. 1, 1997) retreats. Please write or call for an application and information.

**Please note that we have changed some of our programs and added new ones:**

**Group Meditation:** Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 9 PM. Thursday group meditation has been canceled, and instead we will offer tso-ch'an (sitting meditation) instruction by appointment, in the months when there is no Beginners' Meditation Workshop.

**Beginners' Meditation Workshops:** now held every other month. The next will be on Oct. 19, from 9 AM to 1 PM in English, and from 2 to 6 PM in Chinese. Methods of sitting and walking meditation, breathing, sleeping, yoga exercises and massage will be covered, as well as the theory and stages of meditation practice. Please call for further information and to register.

**Introductory One-day Meditation Retreat:** Our first Introductory Retreat was very successful, so we will have these every other month, alternating with the Beginners' Meditation Workshops. Retreats will be held from 9 AM to 5 PM. on Sept. 21 and Nov. 16. Please call for further information and to register.

**All Day Sitting:** Oct. 5, Nov. 2 and Dec. 7, 9 AM to 8 PM. Please call for further information and to register.

**Two Day Retreat:** Oct. 11, 7 PM to Oct. 13, 5 PM. Please call for further information and to register.

**Saturday Sittings:** Every Saturday, except when other meditation is scheduled, from 9 AM to 3 PM. Please call for further information.

**Tai-chi Chuan class:** A gentle and relaxing form of exercise, Tai-chi Chuan has absorbed the best qualities of Chinese traditional therapeutic exercise. The class is taught by David Ngo at the beginning and intermediate level, on Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9 PM.



## Ongoing Activities, except during retreats:

**Recitation Group:** Mon. evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 P.M. Amitabha Buddha recitation in Chinese, and prostrations.

**Group Meditation:** Tues. evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

**Ch'an Sitting Group:** Fri. 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., with a social half hour until 9:30. An evening of sitting and walking meditation, with a short talk on the application of Ch'an to daily life or the concepts and methods of Ch'an. This is also an opportunity to ask Master Sheng-yen or one of the resident monks for guidance in practice. Please call for details.

**Sunday Program:** Meditation, chanting, vegetarian lunch, afternoon talk and afternoon meditation. 10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

**First Saturday of each month:** One day Ch'an retreat, 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Please call for details and to register.

**Last Saturday of every other month:** Beginners' Meditation Workshop. In English: 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. In Chinese 2:00 to 6:00. Please call for details and to register.

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